

Courageous Humility - Acts 14:8-20 – March 30th, 2008

- Paul and Barnabas are experiencing magnificent success on this, their first missionary journey but it has come packaged with hardship.
- As they continue on in their unflinching fearlessness, they seemingly display an unspeakable courage despite what they experience.
- To me, this is a teaching about courage, not only courage but a humble courage. So I've titled this study; "Courageous Humility."

- Acts 14:8-20 is a picture, if you will, showing us what both courage and humility look like in the person of Paul and Barnabas.

- I found several courageous and humble acts here in the text, and would like to look at them together this morning.

1. Ministers to anyone (Verses 8-9)

8 In Lystra there sat a man crippled in his feet, who was lame from birth and had never walked. 9 He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed

v8-9 In Lystra they come across a crippled man who listens to Paul preach. Paul looks at him and sees that he has faith to be healed.

James 2:1 My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism. NIV

2. Exercises faith (Verse 10)

10 and called out, "Stand up on your feet!" At that, the man jumped up and began to walk.

v10 Paul calls out and tells him to stand up on his feet. When the man hears this, he exercises his faith, jumps up and starts to walk.

James 2:26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. KJV

3. Gives God the glory (Verses 11-13)

11 When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in human form!" 12 Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes because he was the chief speaker. 13 The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought bulls and wreaths to the city gates because he and the crowd wanted to offer sacrifices to them.

v11 When the crowd sees what Paul did, they shout out saying that Paul and Barnabas were gods having come down in human form.

v12-13 They called Barnabas Zeus, and Paul Hermes, because he was the main speaker, then bring sacrifices to offer to them as gods.

- The people in Lystra had a legend that once Zeus and Hermes had visited their land disguised as mortals.

- At that time, no one showed any hospitality except for one older couple.

- In their anger at the people, Zeus and Hermes wiped out the whole population, except for the old couple.

- This may explain why the people of Lystra were so quick to think that Paul and Barnabas were them, again!

- When Captain James Cook first dropped anchor in Hanauma Bay, he was greeted with great ceremony.

- The islanders thought he was their god, Lono. Cook's fatal mistake was to not do what Paul and Barnabas did here.

- Some believe that Cook, about to take advantage of a woman, was clubbed in the back of the head by her husband.

- He was angry, and forgot that Captain Cook was "god." So when he started bleeding and groaning, he had been found out.

- They realized that he wasn't a god, because gods don't bleed. So, he was killed on the spot.

4. Doesn't exalt oneself (Verses 14-15)

14 But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting: 15 "Men, why are you doing this? We too are only men, human like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them.

v14-15 When they hear them doing this they tear their clothes and run out shouting at them that they are just humans and not gods.

Romans 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. KJV

5. Proclaims the goodness of God (Verses 16-18)

16 In the past, he let all nations go their own way. 17 Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy." 18 Even with these words, they had difficulty keeping the crowd from sacrificing to them.

v16-17 Paul then tells them about the testimony of the true and living God who provides for them in the kindness he's shown to them.

v18 Even after saying that, Paul and Barnabas had difficulty keeping them from still wanting to sacrifice to them as if they were gods.

6. Doesn't retaliate (Verses 19-20)

19 Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead. 20 But after the disciples had gathered around him, he got up and went back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe.

v19 Some Jews come from Antioch and Iconium, win over the crowd then stone Paul, drag him outside and leave him for dead.

v20 The disciples gather around him, he gets up and goes back into the city. Then the next day, they leave for Derbe.

Romans 12:19-21 19 Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. 20 On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. NIV